

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7685

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0414

LIMDIS

JAKARTA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, XB, XC, XE, BM

SUBJECT: INGERSOLL VISIT TO BURMA (FEBRUARY 7-9, 1974)

REF: STATE 24552

SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S VISIT ALTHOUGH BRIEF PROVED BOTH TIMELY AND PRODUCTIVE. THE GUB'S READINESS TO BE LESS STANDOFFISH WITH USA IN CERTAIN RESPECTS WAS EVIDENCE BY WARM HOSPITALITY EXTENDED, INCLUDING EXTENSIVE MEETINGS WITH CHAIRMAN NE WIN AND GENERAL SAN YU (REPORTED SEPARATELY). THE SECRETARY GAINED FIRST HAND EXPOSURE TO SENIOR BURMESE OFFICIALS AND THE POST'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE GOVERNMENT WERE STRENGTHENED SOMEWHAT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE GUB RECEPTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND MRS. INGERSOLL WAS MARKED BY UNUSUAL FRIENDLINESS. A MEASURE OF THE IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON HIS VISIT WAS THE FACT THAT CHAIRMAN NE WIN POSTPONED A TRIP IN ORDER TO RECEIVE AND DINE AMBASSADOR INGERSOLL. WHILE THEIR MEETING HAD LITTLE SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT, THE AURA OF GOODWILL IMPLIED THAT THE GUB WOULD WELCOME MORE FREQUENT INTERCHANGES WITH APPROPRIATE SENIOR US OFFICIALS.

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2. THE FACT THAT NE WIN AND INGERSOLL STRUCK IT OFF SO WELL MAY HAVE BEEN THE REASON FOR THE SUBSEQUENT CORDIAL MEETINGS WITH KEY BURMESE OFFICIALS INCLUDING GENERAL SAN YU WHO EMPHASIZED TO INGERSOLL THAT NE WIN HAD DELAYED HIS DEPARTURE FROM RANGOON TO SEE HIM.

3. SAN YU WITH UNEXPECTED FRANKNESS TALKED TO INGERSOLL ABOUT PRC SPONSORSHIP OF THE BCP INSURGENTS IN SHAN STATE, AND GUB ATTITUDES TOWARDS THAILAND (RANGOON 266).

4. SOME MEMBERS OF RANGOON DIPLOMATIC CORPS REMARKED TO ME HOW WELL THE INGERSOLL VISIT SEEMED TO HAVE GONE. THEY SPECULATED ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT AND SOME WERE DISINCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT THE REASONS OF THE TRIP WERE AS PRESENTED, I.E. FACT-FINDING, PEOPLE-MEETING, IMPRESSION-GATHERING. MY COLLEAGUES ALSO WONDERED WHY BOTH NE WIN AND SAN YU HAD CHOSEN TO SEE THE AMBASSADOR, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE JUST COMPLETED STATE RECEPTION OF PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM (FEBRUARY 4-6).

5. PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR PIRACHA WHO IS KNOWN TO BE CLOSE TO THE PRC EMBASSY TOLD ME THAT THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED GREAT CURIOSITY AND INTEREST IN THE INGERSOLL VISIT, WONDERING WHETHER ANY SPECIAL MEANINGS WAS TO BE FOUND IN NE WIN'S SUCCESSIVE MEETINGS WITH WHITLAM AND INGERSOLL, BOTH OF WHOM RECEIVED SO MUCH ATTENTION FROM THE CHAIRMAN. THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR'S APPREHENSIONS WERE AMPLIFIED, OR SO PIRACHA SAID, WHEN HE SAW ME TALKING AT LENGTH WITH THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR: WAS SOME ENCIRCLEMENT BEING PLOTTED? I URGED PIRACHA TO REASSURE HIS PARANOIC CHINESE FRIEND THAT ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S VISIT WAS WHOLLY INNOCENT OF SUCH DESIGN.

6. CREDIT FOR SUCCESS OF VISIT WAS DUE IN NO SMALL DEGREE TO INGERSOLL'S GENIAL AND RECEPTIVE MANNER AND HIS EVIDENT DESIRE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BURMA. HIS HIGHLEVEL HOSTS, PROUD AND SENSITIVE AS THEY ARE, RESPONDED IN KIND AND MAY WELL FEEL THAT THEY HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING FRIEND
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